



April 28, 2008

The Honorable Harry M. Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Boehner
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Leader Reid, Minority Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader Boehner,

Time is running out for small businesses across the country which depend on the H-2B visa program to meet their hiring needs during peak seasons. As Governors, we urge Congress to immediately pass a one-year stand alone extension of the H-2B returning worker program.

The 33,000 cap on H-2B visas for seasonal workers for the second half of FY2008 was reached on January 2, 2008, however, the labor needs of seasonal businesses across the country have not been addressed. In the past, the 'returning worker' provision of the H-2B visa program provided much needed flexibility for businesses to meet the additional seasonal labor demands they face. Under this provision, returning H-2B workers were not counted against the numerical limit. Unfortunately, for the first time since 2005, this 'returning worker' provision was not extended.

Across the country businesses that depend on H-2B workers are facing a severe shortage headed into the busy summer months. Each day Congress fails to act adds to the tremendous uncertainty faced by our seasonal businesses. The economic impact of a further delay on these businesses and our states cannot be over-stated.

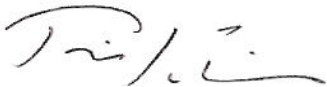
While we understand that long-term reform of the H-2B program must be discussed in the context of broad-based comprehensive immigration reform, due to the immediate need for action, we urge you to act to pass a stand alone one-year extension of the H-2B returning worker program. We believe that this approach is the most effective means of securing immediate relief.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Governor Deval L. Patrick
Massachusetts



Governor Timothy M. Kaine
Virginia



Governor Janet Napolitano
Arizona



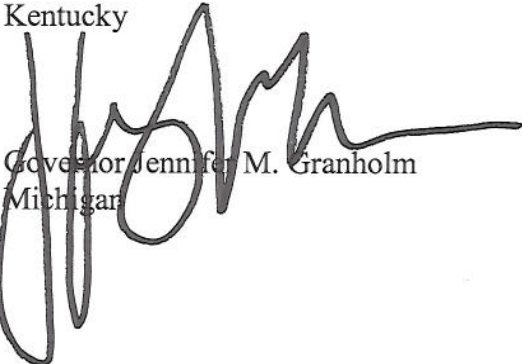
Governor Bill Ritter, Jr.
Colorado



Governor Ruth Ann Minner
Delaware



Governor Steven L. Beshear
Kentucky



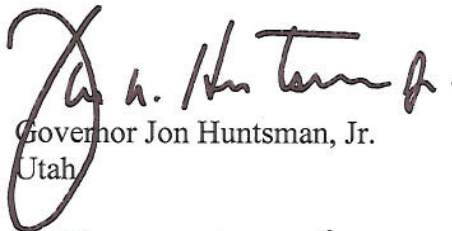
Governor Jennifer M. Granholm
Michigan



Governor Mark Sanford
South Carolina



Governor M. Michael Rounds
South Dakota



Governor Jon Huntsman, Jr.
Utah



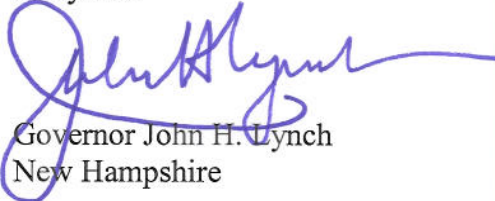
Governor James H. Douglas
Vermont



Governor Kathleen Sebelius
Kansas



Governor Martin O'Malley
Maryland



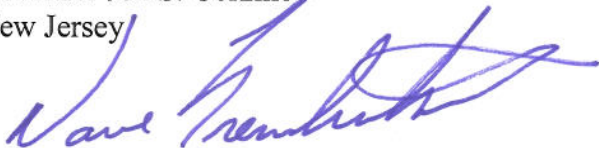
Governor John H. Lynch
New Hampshire



Governor Jon S. Corzine
New Jersey



Governor Jim Doyle
Wisconsin



Governor Dave Freudenthal
Wyoming

cc: Members of Congress